WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An electronic signature method comprising the steps of:

analyzing a target document to generate a representation having a structure;

generating an electronic signature from each structural element of the structure of the generated representation; and

concatenating the generated electronic signatures into a single signature corresponding to the structure of the generated representation.

- 2. An electronic signature method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of setting a level of attachment of electronic signatures to structural elements of the document, whereby precision of reliability judgment of a document with an electronic signature can be varied depending on the level.
- 3. An electronic signature method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein a rate of coincidence between the target document and the target document with an electronic signature is found from a rate of structural elements having authenticated electronic signatures to the whole structure.
- 4. A method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein said concatenating step includes putting the generated electronic signatures in a row.
- 5. An electronic signature apparatus comprising:

 means for analyzing a target document to generate a
 representation having a structure;

means for generating an electronic signature from each structural element of the structure of the generated representation; and

means for concatenating the generated electronic signatures into a single signature corresponding to the structure of the generated representation.

6. An electronic signature apparatus according to claim 5, wherein a level of attachment of electronic signatures to structural elements of the document can be

set by said means for generating an electronic signature, whereby precision of reliability judgement of a document with an electronic signature can be varied depending on the level.

- 7. An electronic signature apparatus according to claim 5 or 6, wherein said means for concatenating puts the generated electronic signatures in a row.
- 8. An electronic signature apparatus according to claim 5, 6 or 7, further comprising:

means for analyzing the structure of the target document to verify the target document having the generated electronic signature; and

means for analyzing each of the electronic signatures of the structural elements of the target document.

- 9. An electronic signature apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said means for analyzing the electronic signature determine a rate of coincidence between the target document and the target document with an electrical signature from a rate of structural elements having authenticated electronic signatures to the whole structure.
- 10. An electronic signature apparatus comprising: an electronic signature generator including:

means for analyzing a target document to generate a representation having a structure;

means for generating an electronic signature from each structural element of the structure of the generated representation; and

means for concatenating the generated electronic signatures into a single signature corresponding to the structure of the generated representation; and

an electronic signature analyzer including:
means for analyzing a structure of the target
document having the generated electronic signature; and
means for analyzing the added electronic signatures.